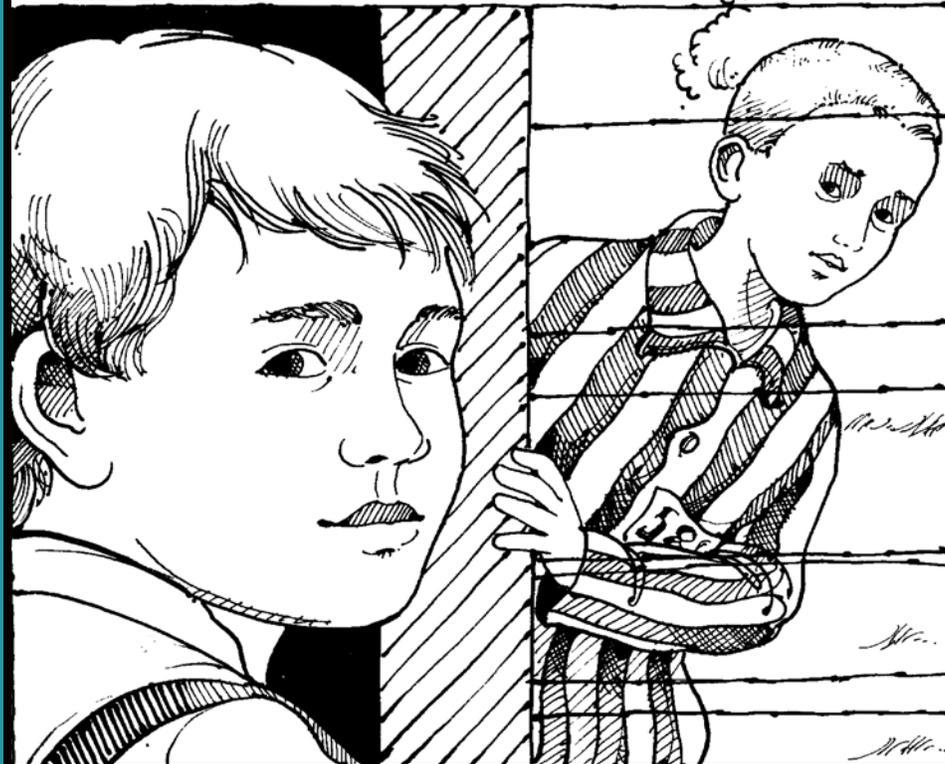


Novel·Ties

# The Boy in the Striped Pajamas

JOHN BOYNE



## A Study Guide

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## For the Teacher

This reproducible study guide to use in conjunction with the novel *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* consists of lessons for guided reading. Written in chapter-by-chapter format, the guide contains a synopsis, pre-reading activities, vocabulary and comprehension exercises, as well as extension activities to be used as follow-up to the novel.

In a homogeneous classroom, whole class instruction with one title is appropriate. In a heterogeneous classroom, reading groups should be formed: each group works on a different novel at its own reading level. Depending upon the length of time devoted to reading in the classroom, each novel, with its guide and accompanying lessons, may be completed in three to six weeks.

Begin using NOVEL-TIES for reading development by distributing the novel and a folder to each child. Distribute duplicated pages of the study guide for students to place in their folders. After examining the cover and glancing through the book, students can participate in several pre-reading activities. Vocabulary questions should be considered prior to reading a chapter; all other work should be done after the chapter has been read. Comprehension questions can be answered orally or in writing. The classroom teacher should determine the amount of work to be assigned, always keeping in mind that readers must be nurtured and that the ultimate goal is encouraging students' love of reading.

The benefits of using NOVEL-TIES are numerous. Students read good literature in the original, rather than in abridged or edited form. The good reading habits, formed by practice in focusing on interpretive comprehension and literary techniques, will be transferred to the books students read independently. Passive readers become active, avid readers.

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## SYNOPSIS

Nine-year-old Bruno is upset to learn that his family must leave their comfortable home in Berlin. The man whom the boy calls the “Fury” (Führer) sends Bruno’s father, a Nazi officer, to “Out-With” (Auschwitz) to be the new commandant. Bruno hates his “cold, nasty” new house. As he looks out of his bedroom window, he sees people in striped pajamas who appear to live in huts on the other side of a barbed-wire fence. Bruno soon discovers that these people are treated cruelly by the soldiers, such as the sadistic Lieutenant Kotler, on whom Bruno’s sister Gretel develops a crush.

One of the people from the other side of the fence is Pavel, who prepares the vegetables and waits on the family. After Bruno falls off a tire swing, Pavel rescues the boy and administers medical aid. Bruno then finds out that Pavel is a doctor and wonders why he is now acting as a servant. He also wonders why his mother takes the credit for helping him.

Bruno is confused about his father’s job. He thinks the Commandant looks very smart in his uniform and is proud when Maria, the maid, relates the kind things the man has done for her family. However, Bruno also knows that his grandmother was very angry about her son’s new job, and the two had a terrible fight. The boy questions why his father fails to stop Lieutenant Kotler from brutally punishing Pavel for spilling wine.

One day Bruno goes exploring along the fence and notices a boy on the other side. Bruno and the boy, Shmuel, quickly form a friendship. Although Shmuel tries to describe the brutal conditions in the camp, naive Bruno cannot understand why people in striped pajamas are living on the other side of the fence. Even when his sister Gretel ultimately explains that they are Jews and should be hated, he still fails to comprehend. All he knows is that he is pleased with his new friend, and he continues to visit Shmuel.

One day Bruno is surprised to find Shmuel in his kitchen polishing glasses. Shmuel explains that Lieutenant Kotler brought him to do the job because of his tiny fingers. Bruno then notices just how thin his friend’s hands are and offers the starving boy some chicken. Although Shmuel is afraid to eat it, he finally relents. Unfortunately, Kotler appears and accuses him of stealing food. When the boy explains that his friend Bruno gave it to him, a frightened Bruno refutes this. As a result, Kotler later punishes Shmuel, who ultimately forgives the contrite Bruno. The boys no longer have to worry about Kotler when he is transferred for getting too close to the Commandant’s wife.

After Bruno’s mother convinces her husband to allow her and the children to return to Berlin, Bruno promises to help Shmuel locate his missing father before he leaves. As a disguise, Bruno dons a striped outfit that Shmuel gets for him. With his head shaved due to lice, Bruno looks like an inmate and crawls under the fence. As he tries to help Shmuel find his father, Bruno is appalled by all he sees. When the boys finally give up their search, Bruno wants nothing more than to return home. But, before he can leave, he and Shmuel get caught in a march to the gas chamber. Bruno dies holding his friend’s hand.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### The Holocaust

When World War I ended in 1919, the Treaty of Versailles stripped Germany of its pride and economic stability. This was a time of high unemployment and economic chaos in Germany, conditions that were ripe for Adolph Hitler and his National Socialist German Worker’s Party—the Nazi Party—to rise to power.

Using the Jews as a scapegoat, Hitler roused the German people with a viciously anti-Semitic program and a plan to build a superior German “master race.” From the time he became the absolute dictator of Germany, Hitler carried out a methodical persecution of the Jewish people. His “final solution to the Jewish question” was extermination in death camps, also known as concentration camps. This sad time in history is referred to as the Holocaust. During the period that Hitler was in power (1933–1945), six million of Europe’s nine million Jews were murdered by the Nazis.

Terrorism against Jews was carried out by the SS, ruthless police units of the Nazi Party. Jews were forced to wear the Star of David so they could be easily identified. Special units began mass shootings that claimed about two million lives, but these were too slow to suit the Nazis. After putting up with horrible conditions in ghettos, such as the Kraków ghetto in Poland, Jews were finally crowded into freight cars and transported to concentration camps. One of the most notorious of these was Auschwitz, which was both a death and labor camp, with a small percentage of the people kept alive as slave labor. At Auschwitz, 2,000 people at a time could be killed in the large gas chambers, and almost 5,000 bodies could be burned in the oven in one day.

On June 6, 1944, Allied forces landed in Normandy, France, in the D-day invasion. Slowly the concentration camps were liberated. The Soviet troops liberated Auschwitz on January 27, 1945. By that time, an estimated two million persons, including one and a half million Jews, had been murdered there.

### British English

The author of this novel, John Boyne, is from Ireland. As a result, he uses British spelling for some words. There are some spelling differences between American and British English. The following chart shows some major differences.

	<b>-or vs. -our</b>	<b>-er vs. -re</b>	<b>-i vs. -y</b>	<b>-ic vs. -is</b>	<b>-a vs. -y</b>
<b>American</b>	favor	center	tire	practice	pajamas
<b>British</b>	favour	centre	tyre	practise	pyjamas

The following are some British words that you will read in the book and their American equivalents:

<b>British Word</b>	<b>American Equivalent</b>
greengrocer	produce market
courgette	zucchini
jumper	sweater

## PRE-READING QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Preview the book by reading the title and the author's name and by looking at the illustration on the cover. What do you think this book is about? Will it be serious or humorous? When and where do you think it takes place?
2. **Cooperative Learning Activity:** Read the Background Information on page two of this study guide and do some additional research to find out more about the Holocaust. Then brainstorm with a small group of classmates to fill in the first two columns of a K-W-L chart, such as the one below. When you finish the book, return to the chart and complete the third column.

<b>The Holocaust</b>		
<b>What I Know -K-</b>	<b>What I Want to Learn -W-</b>	<b>What I Learned -L-</b>

3. **Social Studies Connection:** On a map of Europe and a globe, locate Germany and the city of Berlin, Poland and the city of Krakow, Denmark, and Switzerland, all places that are referred to in the book.
4. *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* relates to the Nazis treatment of the Jews during the Holocaust. Make a list of books and movies that portray this tragic time in history. What purpose do these books and movies serve? Do you think it is important to continue to remember the Holocaust?
5. Have you read any other books about the Holocaust set in Europe during World War II? If so, when and where did these stories take place? What did you learn about life at the time?
6. How would you characterize the Nazis who carried out the persecution and murder of the Jews? Can you imagine that these same people might have been loving and kind to their families and friends? How might this make their crimes seem even more horrible?
7. **Cooperative Learning Activity:** Work with a small cooperative learning group to discuss the meaning of the word *prejudice*. What does the word mean to you? What causes it? How can it be prevented or overcome?

**Pre-Reading Questions and Activities (cont.)**

8. Although the story is fiction, it is based on historical facts. The characters in such a work of historical fiction may be fictional or historical or both. Discuss with your classmates other works of historical fiction they have read or seen in films and what periods of history they covered. What do you enjoy about this type of book? What challenges do you think an author faces when writing a work of historical fiction?
9. **Social Studies Connection:** As you read, create a time line from the year of Bruno’s birth, 1934, through the end of the novel, 1945. Fill in important historical events relating to Hitler’s Germany. Use events mentioned in the novel as well as significant events you find in an encyclopedia or history book.
10. Look at the title page at the beginning of the book and you will notice that the author calls this book a fable. A fable is one of the oldest literary forms. It is usually a short tale that teaches a moral, or lesson. The main characters, sometimes animals, are characterized quickly with a few broad strokes. One character usually displays a flaw that leads to a downfall. The conclusion leads directly to the moral. A fable is universal, cross-cultural, and ultimately, highlights what makes us human. As you read the novel, use this chart to provide examples of how it fits this genre.

<b>Characteristics of a Fable</b>	<b>Examples from <i>The Boy in the Striped Pajamas</i></b>
Teaches a moral	
Main characters are broadly drawn	
One character displays a flaw that leads to a downfall	
Highlights what makes us human	

**Pre-Reading Questions and Activities (cont.)**

11. In the Anticipation Guide that follows, write *T* in the “Before Reading” column if the statement is true in your opinion. Write *F* if you feel the statement is false. After completing the book, mark your answers again in the “After Reading” column to see if your opinion has changed.

Statements	Before Reading	After Reading
1. It is difficult to adjust to living in a new place.		
2. When you see someone being mistreated, you should always try to help.		
3. Sometimes it is better not to know if something horrible is going on around you.		
4. It is difficult for children to see the faults of their parents.		
5. A person can be kind to some people and cruel to others.		
6. Betrayal of a friend is unforgivable.		
7. People are more alike than they are different.		
8. It is possible to judge someone even before you get to know that person as an individual.		

**CHAPTERS ONE, TWO**

**Vocabulary:** Synonyms are words with similar meanings. Draw a line from each word in column A to its synonym in column B. Then use the words in column A to fill in the blanks in the sentences below.

- | A               | B                |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. chaos        | a. indifferently |
| 2. frustration  | b. limitations   |
| 3. dismissively | c. immediate     |
| 4. presumed     | d. annoyance     |
| 5. desolate     | e. preferences   |
| 6. restrictions | f. disorder      |
| 7. foreseeable  | g. lifeless      |
| 8. priorities   | h. supposed      |

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1. The man was \_\_\_\_\_ to be innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.
2. Your \_\_\_\_\_ are wrong if you choose to watch television instead of finishing your report.
3. Happy with the community and its schools, my family intends to live here for the \_\_\_\_\_ future.
4. The severe hurricane left the town in a state of \_\_\_\_\_ .
5. There are so many \_\_\_\_\_ on the use of the playground that no one wants to come here anymore.
6. After trying in vain to solve the math problem, the student shook her head in \_\_\_\_\_.
7. The busy saleswoman waved the children off \_\_\_\_\_ when they asked her lots of questions.
8. The astronaut took a walk on the rocky, \_\_\_\_\_ surface of the moon.

Read to find out why Bruno is upset about moving.

## Chapters One, Two (cont.)

### Questions:

1. Why doesn't Bruno understand the nature of his father's job?
2. How does Bruno's mother feel about leaving the house in Berlin?
3. How does Bruno feel about his sister?
4. Why is Bruno reluctant to leave Berlin?
5. How does Bruno react to his new house?
6. How do Bruno and Maria react to the young soldier in the hall?

### Questions for Discussion:

1. Why do you think Bruno's mother fails to tell her son the exact nature of his father's job?
2. Do you think Bruno's mother could have done anything to make the move easier for her son?
3. In your opinion, could Bruno's mother have convinced her husband not to leave Berlin?
4. Why do you think that looking out the window makes Bruno feel "very cold and unsafe"?

### Literary Device: Point of view

In literature, the point of view refers to the person telling the story. It can be narrated by a character in the book or by the author. Sometimes even though the book is narrated by the author, it focuses on the thoughts and feelings of only one character. From this point of view, we observe the actions through the eyes of only one of the characters in the story.

Who is telling the story?

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On whose thoughts and feelings does the narration focus? Why do you think the author chose this point of view?

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## Chapters One, Two (cont.)

### Literary Element: Setting

In literature, the setting is the time and place in which a story occurs. Setting is especially important in a historical novel such as this one.

What is the setting of this novel?

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What details about the setting help make the characters' times and lifestyles seem real?

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### Social Studies Connection:

Bruno talks about the "Fury," which is a mispronunciation of Fuhrer, the title given to the dictator Adolph Hitler. "The beautiful blonde woman" Bruno refers to is Eva Braun. Do some research to find out more about her and her relationship with Hitler.

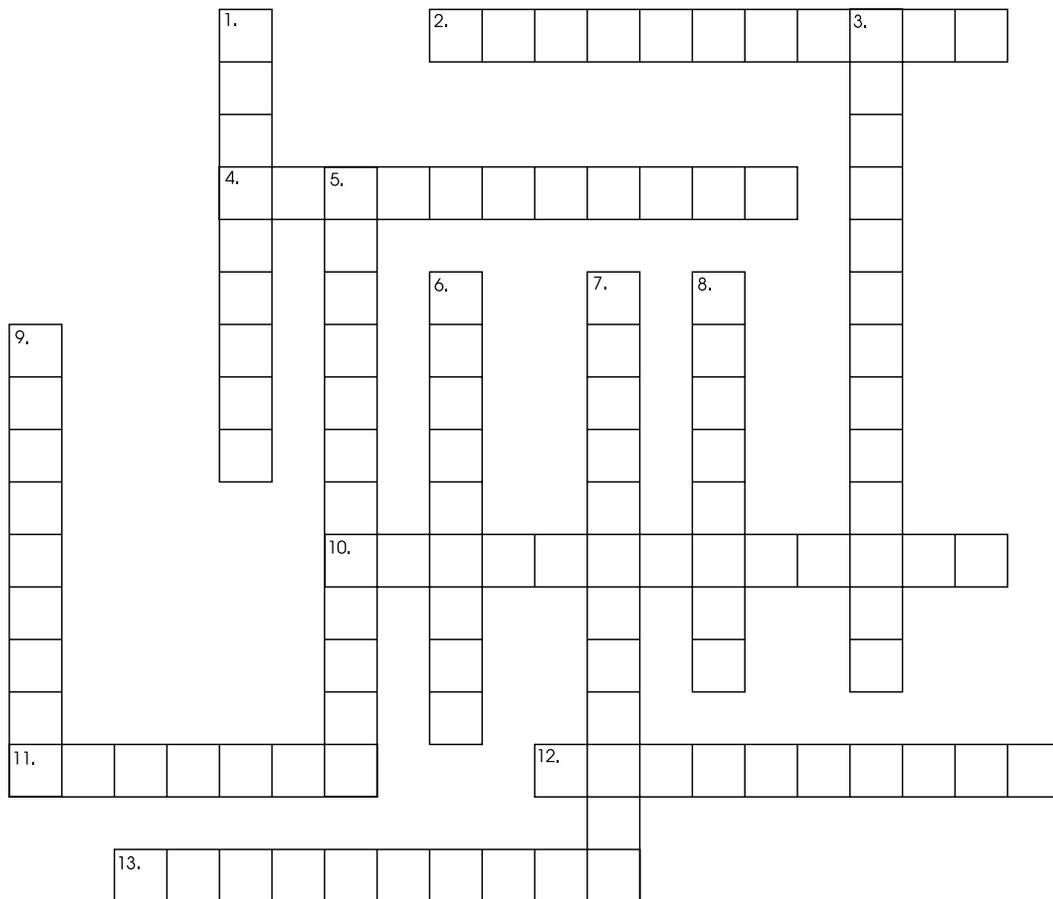
### Writing Activity:

Bruno's mother tells him to make the best of a bad situation. Write about a time when you had to do this.

CHAPTERS THREE – FIVE

**Vocabulary:** Use the words in the Word Box and the clues below to complete the crossword puzzle.

WORD BOX			
acknowledging	customary	exasperation	insolent
complementing	decidedly	inscription	significance
considerate	distinctly	insistent	torture
conviction			



**Across**

- 2. thoughtful
- 4. words engraved on a hard surface
- 10. completing
- 11. cause great pain
- 12. without question
- 13. strong belief

**Down**

- 1. synonym for 12 Across
- 3. admitting to be true
- 5. importance
- 6. usual
- 7. extreme annoyance
- 8. boldly rude
- 9. continuing to make a firm demand

## Chapters Three – Five (cont.)

Read to find out why Bruno is upset about moving.

### Questions:

1. How does Gretel feel about the new house?
2. Why does Gretel hesitate before looking out of Bruno's window?
3. Why is Gretel surprised when she looks out the window?
4. How are the children on the other side of the fence treated by the soldiers?
5. How does Gretel react to the children on the other side of the fence?
6. How were the two trains headed eastward from the station in Berlin different?
7. How does Bruno's father react to his son's desire to go home?

### Questions for Discussion:

1. Do you think that Bruno and his sister Gretel have a normal relationship or one that is made more difficult by the times in which they live?
2. Why do you think it is so difficult for Bruno and Gretel to understand the true nature of Auschwitz?
3. How would you describe Bruno's relationship with his father? Do you think that the Commandant is a good father?
4. How do you know when to keep your mouth shut and when to follow orders? Is there ever a time when someone should not follow orders?
5. What do you think Bruno's father means when he says that the people on the other side of the fence are not people at all?

### Literary Devices:

- I. *Simile*—A simile is a figure of speech in which two unlike objects are compared using the words “like” or “as.” For example:

As they [the Nazi soldiers] left they stood in a row together  
like toy soldiers . . . .

What is being compared?

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What does the comparison suggest about the Nazi soldiers?

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### Chapters Three – Five (cont.)

- II. *Flashback*—A flashback is a scene or series of scenes showing events that happened at an earlier time. Indicate where the flashback begins and ends in Chapter Five. What purpose does this flashback serve?

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#### **Social Studies Connection:**

Bruno’s father has taught him how to do the Hitler salute, adapted by the Nazi Party as a sign of loyalty to its leader, Adolph Hitler. The salute is accompanied by the exclamation of the words *Heil Hitler!* said in a firm and usually loud voice. Do some research to find out about the origin of this salute and how it was used in Hitler’s Germany.

#### **Writing Activity:**

Describe a time when you had a disagreement with one of your parents. What was the disagreement about? How was it resolved?

**CHAPTERS SIX, SEVEN**

**Vocabulary:** Draw a line from each word on the left to its definition on the right. Then use the numbered words to fill in the blanks in the sentences below.

- |                 |                                |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. enforced     | a. reckless adventure or prank |
| 2. reverberated | b. dislike                     |
| 3. engaged      | c. caused to be carried out    |
| 4. incredulous  | d. amusement                   |
| 5. escapade     | e. easily annoyed              |
| 6. diversion    | f. echoed                      |
| 7. distaste     | g. took part                   |
| 8. irritable    | h. showing a lack of belief    |

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1. Playing video games is my favorite \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Most people are \_\_\_\_\_ when they hear stories about flying saucers.
3. After the rain spoiled her plans, my sister was \_\_\_\_\_ for the entire day.
4. After reading the book, the students \_\_\_\_\_ in a lively discussion about the characters.
5. The police officer \_\_\_\_\_ the law against speeding by giving the driver a ticket.
6. My little brother's latest \_\_\_\_\_ ended with a ball breaking a bedroom window.
7. The guide's call \_\_\_\_\_ in the cave.
8. Many people have a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ for snakes.

Read to find out what Maria reveals about Bruno's father.

**Questions:**

1. How does Maria react when Bruno calls his father stupid?
2. Why is Maria grateful to the Commandant?
3. What causes both Bruno and Gretel to feel uncomfortable with Lieutenant Kotler?
4. How does Pavel help Bruno after his accident?
5. Why is Bruno surprised to find out that Pavel is a doctor?

## Chapters Six, Seven (cont.)

### Questions for Discussion:

1. How would you finish Maria's sentence, "He has a lot of kindness in his soul, truly he does, which makes me wonder . . .?"
2. Do you think that Bruno's father could be as kind a man as Maria describes and still be a Nazi officer?
3. Why is Maria so upset when Bruno keeps complaining that his father made a terrible mistake in coming to Out-With?
4. Do you agree with Maria that Bruno should keep his criticism to himself?
5. To what is Maria referring when she says that it is not up to her and Bruno to change things? Why do Bruno and Maria both feel like crying after she makes this statement?
6. What does Pavel mean when he tells Bruno that he thinks he has always been at Out-With?
7. Why does Bruno's mother take credit for cleaning Bruno up after his fall? What does this suggest about her?

### Literary Devices:

- I. *Dramatic Irony*—Dramatic irony, a device used more often in plays than in fiction, refers to a time when one character is ignorant of something that the other characters and the reader understand. What examples of dramatic irony can you find in Bruno's encounter with Pavel?  

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- II. *Metaphor*—A metaphor is a figure of speech in which a comparison between two unlike objects is suggested or implied. For example:

"If you ask me [Bruno], we're all in the same boat. And it's leaking."

What is being compared?  

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What does Bruno mean when he makes this comparison?  

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**Chapters Six, Seven (cont.)**

III. *Simile*—What is being compared in the following simile?

The noise of a door slamming came from downstairs and reverberated through the house loudly—like a gunshot—that Bruno jumped and Maria let out a small scream.

Why is this an apt comparison?

**Literary Element: Characterization**

Characters in literature are revealed by what they say and do and by what others say about them. In the chart below, list important information you have learned about some of the characters in the book. Continue to fill in the chart as you read. You may also add characters to the chart.

Character	Physical Appearance	Personality Traits
Bruno		
Gretel		
Bruno's mother		
Bruno's father		
Lieutenant Kotler		

**Writing Activity:**

Retell the events in one of these chapters focusing on a character's thoughts and feelings other than Bruno's.

**CHAPTERS EIGHT – TEN**

**Vocabulary:** Use the context to help you determine the meaning of the underlined word in each of the following sentences. Then check your definition with a dictionary.

1. Our class president dominated every meeting, not letting anyone else express an opinion.

Your definition \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary definition \_\_\_\_\_

2. Since our birthdays coincide, we can have one party for both of us.

Your definition \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary definition \_\_\_\_\_

3. I want to devise a way to make money this summer.

Your definition \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary definition \_\_\_\_\_

4. Having come from a country where we could not worship, we are now tolerant of all religious practices.

Your definition \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary definition \_\_\_\_\_

5. My mother was happy when she retrieved her lost purse.

Your definition \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary definition \_\_\_\_\_

6. The sinister storm clouds made the picnickers run for cover.

Your definition \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary definition \_\_\_\_\_

7. He rummaged through three drawers before he found his keys.

Your definition \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary definition \_\_\_\_\_

8. The mayor confirmed that he would indeed run for a second term in office.

Your definition \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary definition \_\_\_\_\_

**Chapters Eight – Ten (cont.)**

9. There is nothing sadder than the sight of a forlorn, lost child.

Your definition \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary definition \_\_\_\_\_

10. After receiving a poor grade, the student made a resolution to work harder.

Your definition \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary definition \_\_\_\_\_

Read to learn what Bruno discovers when he goes exploring.

**Questions:**

1. Why did the last play Bruno and Gretel performed with Grandmother end in disaster?
2. Why was Grandmother unimpressed with her son’s new uniform?
3. Why does Herr Liszt dislike storybooks?
4. Why does Bruno decide to explore to find out more about the people in the striped pajamas?
5. Why does Bruno think that Shmuel’s face is strange?
6. When Bruno states that he and Shmuel are like twins, why does Shmuel reply, “A little bit”?

**Questions for Discussion:**

1. What do you think was the cause of the argument between Bruno’s father and Grandmother?
2. How do you think Bruno’s father would define the word *patriot*? How might Grandmother’s definition of the word be different?
3. Do you think that Shmuel is as naive as Bruno?
4. If you were Shmuel, how would you answer Bruno’s last question?

**Literary Devices:**

I. *Flashback*—What is the purpose of the flashback in Chapter Eight?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Chapters Eight – Ten (cont.)**

II. *Metaphor*—What is being compared in the following metaphor?

“I [Grandmother] was merely the blank wall to whom you [Grandfather] addressed your words.”

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What does this reveal about the relationship between Bruno’s grandparents?

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III. *Dramatic Irony*—What is ironic about Bruno thinking it is unfair that Shmuel has many friends while he has none?

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**Literary Element: Conflict**

A conflict is a struggle between opposing forces. An external conflict is a character’s struggle against an outside force, such as nature, society, or another person. An internal conflict is a personal struggle that takes place within a character’s mind. In the chart below, list the conflicts that have occurred in the story so far. Indicate how some of these problems have been resolved. As you continue the story, add to the chart.

<b>External Conflicts</b> →	<b>Resolutions</b>
<b>Internal Conflicts</b> →	<b>Resolutions</b>

## Chapters Eight – Ten (cont.)

### **Music Connection:**

Bruno's grandmother likes to sing *La Vie en Rose*. Find a recording of this song to play for the class. How does your reaction to the song compare to that of Bruno?

### **Social Studies Connection:**

Find photos of the different Nazi uniforms worn during World War II. Which one resembles the one worn by Bruno's father?

### **Writing Activity:**

Bruno writes a letter to his grandmother. Imagine that you are Grandmother and reply to this letter.

## CHAPTERS ELEVEN – THIRTEEN

**Vocabulary:** Use a word from the Word Box to replace each underlined word or phrase in the following sentences. Write the word on the line below the sentence.

WORD BOX			
administered	contradict	disdain	extravagant
catastrophe	deliberately	enunciating	vital

- That was too much praise for such a small deed.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Actors on stage should project their voices, clearly pronouncing each word.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- She responded with scorn to his offer of a bribe.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- The witness will deny the story told by the suspect.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- The earthquake was a terrible disaster for the city.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Her help is very important to the success of our plan.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- The pitcher purposely took his time on the mound in order to throw the right pitch.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- We gave out first aid to the injured persons.  
\_\_\_\_\_

Read to find out what happened when the “Fury” came to dinner.

### Questions:

- Why did Bruno think the Fury was the rudest guest he had ever witnessed?
- How did the blonde woman show consideration for the children?

**Chapters Eleven – Thirteen (cont.)**

3. How does Bruno reveal that he has no understanding of Shmuel’s situation?
4. Why doesn’t Bruno tell his parents about Shmuel?
5. How do Bruno and Shmuel disagree about soldiers?
6. Why does Bruno foresee that catastrophe is going to strike on the night Lieutenant Kotler comes to dinner?
7. Why is Lieutenant Kotler reluctant to talk about his father? How does this arouse the Commandant’s suspicions?
8. How does Bruno come to the realization that he had better not disagree with anyone about anything at Out-With?

**Questions for Discussion:**

1. Why do you think Bruno’s father established extra ground rules for the children before the Fury’s visit?
2. What do the fragments of conversation between Bruno’s parents the night of the Fury’s visit reveal about the move to Out-With?
3. Why is it impossible for Bruno to understand what is going on around him, even when Shmuel tries to explain it to him? Do you think this is believable?
4. What do you think that Maria told Bruno about Pavel?
5. Why do you think that Bruno’s father is concerned about Lieutenant Kotler’s family history?
6. Why does the author leave Pavel’s punishment up to the reader’s imagination rather than describing in detail what Lieutenant Kotler does to him?

**Literary Devices:**

- I. *Flashback*—Why does the author use a flashback in Chapter Eleven to show what happened when the Fury came to dinner? How would the effect have been different if this incident came at the very beginning of the book?

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- II. *Symbolism*—A symbol is an object, person, or event that represents an idea or a set of ideas. What might the fence symbolize? What other objects in the book serve as symbols? Continue to record these symbols as you read further.

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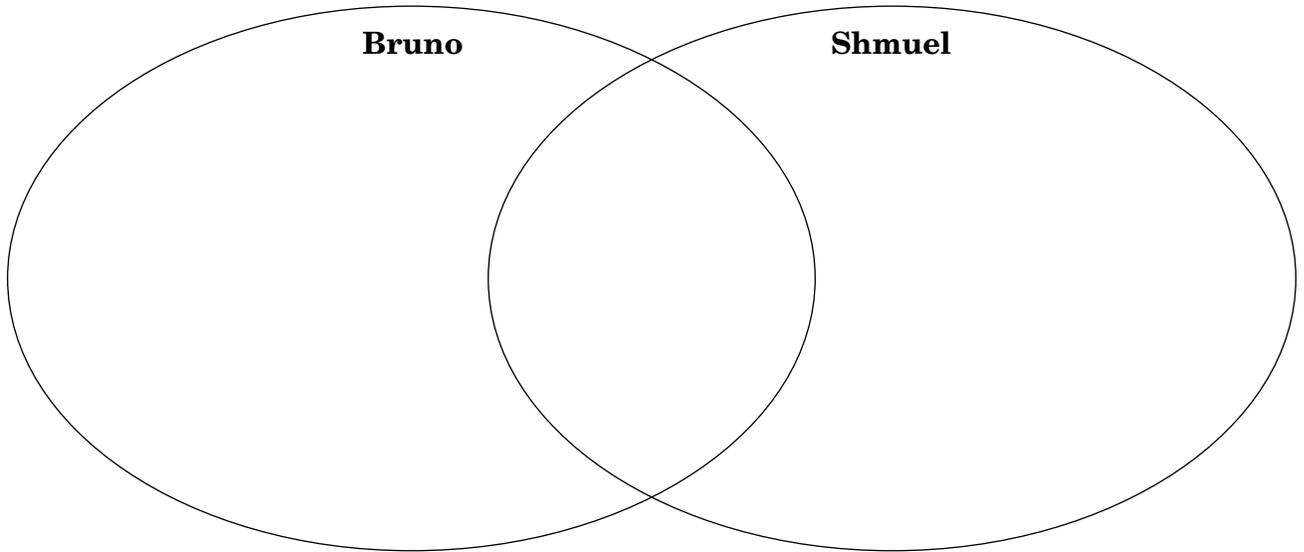


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## Chapters Eleven – Thirteen (cont.)

### Literary Elements: Characterization

Although Bruno feels that Shmuel is like his twin, the boys are different in many ways. Use a Venn diagram, such as the one below, to compare the two characters.



### Writing Activities:

1. Use information from the Venn diagram to explain why Bruno and Shmuel have become friends. Indicate whether or not you think they would have been friends if they had met away from Out-With.
2. Write about a time when you or someone you know was faced with unfair treatment. Describe the incident and tell how you reacted.



## Chapters Fourteen, Fifteen (cont.)

### Questions for Discussion:

1. If you were Shmuel, would you be as patient with Bruno when he fails to understand just how bad conditions are in the camp? Why do you think that Shmuel does not try harder to correct his friend's outrageous statements?
2. Do you think there is any justification for Bruno denying his friendship with Shmuel?
3. Of all the reasons why Bruno does not like Lieutenant Kotler, which one do you find most disturbing? Why do you think that Bruno's mother and sister ignore Kotler's bad qualities?
4. Why do you think that Shmuel forgives Bruno so easily for betraying him? What does this suggest about Shmuel?
5. Why is it significant that the boys touch for the first time?

### Literary Element: Mood

Mood is the overall atmosphere or feeling of a literary work. Happiness or sadness, terror or tranquility—mood can be any strong feeling or emotion the author creates. Read the following passage:

“You will finish polishing all the glasses,” said Lieutenant Kotler in a very quiet voice now, so quiet that Bruno almost couldn't hear him. It was as if all his anger had just changed into something else. Not quite the opposite, but something unexpected and dreadful. “And then I will come to collect you and bring you back to the camp, where we will have a discussion about what happens to boys who steal. This is understood, yes?”

What mood is set by the passage?

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Underline the words that help create this mood.

### Literature Connection:

Bruno is reading *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson. Find out more about the plot of this book. Do you think it is a book that Bruno would enjoy? Why do you think that his father gave it to him to read?

### Writing Activity:

Tell about a time that you failed to stand up for someone or someone failed to stand up for you. What happened? What were the consequences?

**CHAPTERS SIXTEEN – EIGHTEEN**

**Vocabulary:** Antonyms are words with opposite meanings. Draw a line from each word in column A to its antonym in column B. Then use the words in column A to complete the sentences below.

A	B
1. departure	a. considerably
2. inconsolable	b. unclear
3. misshapen	c. perfect
4. remotely	d. calm
5. commitment	e. arrival
6. explicit	f. acceptance
7. rejection	g. indifference

.....

1. Some joint diseases can cause the fingers to become \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Mia became a lawyer because she has a strong \_\_\_\_\_ to justice.
3. The inspector in the factory ordered the \_\_\_\_\_ of all faulty parts.
4. The plane's \_\_\_\_\_ was delayed by a blizzard.
5. He gave such \_\_\_\_\_ directions that everyone arrived at the party on time.
6. The child was \_\_\_\_\_ after the loss of her kitten.
7. Since I was only \_\_\_\_\_ familiar with the subject, I had to do a great deal of research for my report.

Read to find out why Bruno's views about his new home have changed.

**Questions:**

1. Why is Bruno happier about his life at Out-With?
2. Why does Bruno have a hard time understanding Gretel's explanation for the fence?
3. How does Bruno come to look more like Shmuel?
4. How does the Commandant become convinced that his wife should take the children back to Berlin?

## Chapters Sixteen – Eighteen (cont.)

5. Why is Shmuel particularly unhappy when he shows up at the fence after being absent for two days?
6. How does Bruno plan to get into the camp unnoticed?
7. Why does Bruno’s plan to visit the camp seem “very sensible” to the two boys?

### Questions for Discussion:

1. Why do you think Gretel gives up her dolls and replaces them with maps?
2. Why is Gretel unable to answer some of Bruno’s questions? Do you think that Bruno’s parents should give their children more information about Out-With?
3. Do you think Bruno should go ahead with his plan to visit the camp?

### Literary Element: Author’s Purpose

A writer’s purpose may be to inform, entertain, or persuade the reader, or to express an idea. Sometimes the author has more than one purpose for writing a piece. What do you think is the author’s main purpose in writing *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*?

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### Writing Activity:

Imagine you are Bruno’s mother. In a journal entry, tell why you have become increasingly unhappy at Out-With.

**CHAPTERS NINETEEN, TWENTY**

**Vocabulary:** Word analogies are equations in which the first pair of words or phrases has the same relationship as the second pair of words or phrases. For example, UGLY is to BEAUTIFUL as SHARP is to DULL. Both pairs of words are opposites. Choose a word from the Word Box to complete each of the analogies below.

<i>WORD BOX</i>		
appalled	logically	random
implanted	mercilessly	unaccustomed

1. CONFUSED is to PUZZLED as EMBEDDED is to \_\_\_\_\_.
2. POOR is to WELL OFF as \_\_\_\_\_ is to USED TO.
3. PLANNED is to \_\_\_\_\_ as INNOCENT is to GUILTY.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ is to HORRIFIED as EXCITED is to THRILLED.
5. EARLY is to LATE as \_\_\_\_\_ is to KINDLY.
6. REASONABLY is to \_\_\_\_\_ as JOYFULLY is to HAPPILY.

Read to find out what happens when Bruno is able to get inside the camp.

**Questions:**

1. How does the weather threaten Bruno’s plans?
2. Why do the boys want to embrace when Bruno first appears on Shmuel’s side of the fence?
3. How does the reality of the camp differ from the way Bruno imagined it?
4. Why doesn’t Bruno leave when he sees what the camp is really like?
5. How is Bruno prevented from going home?
6. How does Bruno come to hold Shmuel’s hand in the airtight room?
7. How do the members of Bruno’s family react to his disappearance?
8. How does the Commandant come to the horrible realization of what happened to his son?

## Chapters Nineteen, Twenty (cont.)

### Questions for Discussion:

1. What has most likely happened to Shmuel’s father? Why is the boy slow to realize this?
2. Why would nothing in the world have persuaded Bruno to let go of Shmuel’s hand at the end of Chapter Nineteen?
3. Who do you think is most responsible for Bruno’s death?

### Literary Devices:

- I. *Foreshadowing*—Foreshadowing refers to clues that the author gives to suggest events that will occur later in the book. What events in the novel foreshadow Bruno’s fate?

- II. *Irony*—Verbal irony is a contrast between what is said or written and what is really meant. For example:

And that’s the end of the story about Bruno and his family.  
Of course all this happened a long time ago and nothing like  
that could ever happen again.  
Not in this day and age.

What is ironic about the passage?

Why does the author end the novel this way?

### Literary Element: Theme

An author usually writes a story to communicate a general message about life and how people behave. This message, or theme, can typically be stated in one sentence. A long literary work might have more than one theme. Make a list of important themes in this book. Consider what the book is saying about the following topics:

- prejudice
- courage
- loyalty *vs.* betrayal
- innocence
- good *vs.* evil
- friendship

Write a sentence about each topic.

### Writing Activities:

1. Imagine that you were with the Soviets who first entered Auschwitz to liberate the camp. In a letter, describe what you saw and your feelings at the time.
2. In a few well-developed paragraphs, tell how this book has affected you. Would you recommend it to others? Why or why not?

## CLOZE ACTIVITY

The following passage is taken from Chapter Nineteen of this novel. Read it through completely. Then fill in each blank with a word that make sense. Afterwards, you may compare your language with that of the author.

As it turned out, all the things that he thought might be there—weren't.

There were no grown-ups \_\_\_\_\_<sup>1</sup> on rocking chairs on their porches.

And \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup> children weren't playing games in groups.

And \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup> only was there not a fruit and \_\_\_\_\_<sup>4</sup> stall,  
but there wasn't a cafe either \_\_\_\_\_<sup>5</sup> there had been back in Berlin.

Instead \_\_\_\_\_<sup>6</sup> were crowds of people sitting together in  
\_\_\_\_\_,<sup>7</sup> staring at the ground, looking horribly sad; \_\_\_\_\_<sup>8</sup> all had  
one thing in common: they \_\_\_\_\_<sup>9</sup> all terribly skinny and their eyes were  
\_\_\_\_\_<sup>10</sup> and they all had shaved heads, which \_\_\_\_\_<sup>11</sup> thought  
must have meant there had been \_\_\_\_\_<sup>12</sup> outbreak of lice here too.

In one \_\_\_\_\_<sup>13</sup> Bruno could see three soldiers who seemed  
\_\_\_\_\_<sup>14</sup> be in charge of a group of \_\_\_\_\_<sup>15</sup> twenty men. They were  
shouting at them, \_\_\_\_\_<sup>16</sup> some of the men had fallen to \_\_\_\_\_<sup>17</sup>  
knees and were remaining there with their \_\_\_\_\_<sup>18</sup> in their hands.

In another corner he \_\_\_\_\_<sup>19</sup> see more soldiers standing around and  
laughing \_\_\_\_\_<sup>20</sup> looking down the barrels of their guns, \_\_\_\_\_<sup>21</sup>  
them in random directions, but not firing \_\_\_\_\_<sup>22</sup>.

In fact everywhere he looked, all he \_\_\_\_\_<sup>23</sup> see was two different  
types of people: \_\_\_\_\_<sup>24</sup> happy, laughing, shouting soldiers in their uniforms  
\_\_\_\_\_<sup>25</sup> unhappy, crying people in their striped pajamas, \_\_\_\_\_<sup>26</sup> of  
whom seemed to be staring into \_\_\_\_\_<sup>27</sup> as if they were actually asleep.

'I don't think I like it here,' said Bruno after a while.

**POST-READING QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES**

1. Return to the K-W-L chart that you began in the Pre-Reading Questions and Activities on page three of this study guide. Based on the knowledge you have gained, correct any errors and add new information to column three. Then compare your responses with those of your classmates.
2. Return to the Anticipation Guide in the Pre-Reading Questions and Activities on page five of this study guide. Fill in the “After Reading” column. Have any of your opinions changed?
3. Return to the character chart that you began on page fourteen of this study guide. Complete the chart and compare your responses with some of your classmates. Select one of Bruno’s characteristics and describe how he exhibited this trait throughout the novel.
4. Return to the conflict chart on page seventeen of this study guide. Are there any additional conflicts to add? Have all conflicts been resolved? If not, how do you think they will be resolved?
5. Do you agree with John Boyne’s decision to present the horrible events of the Holocaust through the eyes of a naive child? How does this decision affect the story?
6. Anti-Semitism and other forms of prejudice are constant issues. Discuss current news items describing incidents of prejudice. With your classmates, discuss ways these prejudices might be overcome.
7. There is a movie version of *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*. Suppose that it is coming soon to a theater near you. Study the movie advertisements in your local newspaper and design an ad for the movie. In your ad, you might feature the part or parts of the story that you find most interesting or effective. Remember that the purpose of the ad is to make people want to see the film.
8. Although Shmuel is a fictional character, many children suffered in concentration camps during World War II. Some of the children’s poems and drawings appear in the book *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*. Locate this book in your library. Read the poems and look at the drawings. What were the children feeling? What did they hope for? In what ways were their feelings and hopes like yours? In what ways were they different?
9. In your library locate books about the period and places mentioned in *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*. In these books find photos that might represent various characters and scenes in the novel. Make copies of these photos. Then write captions identifying the characters and scenes shown in the photos.

**Post-Reading Questions and Activities (cont.)**

10. **Literature Circle:** Have a literature circle discussion in which you tell your personal reactions to *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*. Here are some questions and sentence starters to help your literature circle begin a discussion.
- Which character is most like you? How?
  - How realistic are the characters? Do any remind you of people you know?
  - Which character did you like the most? The least?
  - Who else would you like to have read this book? Why?
  - What questions would you like to ask the author about this novel?
  - It was not fair when . . .
  - I would have liked to see . . .
  - I didn't understand . . .
  - I wonder . . .
  - I thought Bruno was being foolish when . . .
  - I thought Bruno showed wisdom when . . .
  - Bruno learned that . . .

## SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

- Auerbacher, Inge. *I Am a Star: Child of the Holocaust*. Penguin.
- Boraks-Nemetz, Lillian. *The Old Brown Suitcase*. Ronsdale Press.
- Bishop, Claire Huchet. *Twenty and Ten*. Penguin.
- Kerr, Judith. *When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit*. HarperCollins.
- \* Lowry, Lois. *Journey to America*. Simon & Schuster.
- \* \_\_\_\_\_. *Number the Stars*. Random House.
- \* Matas, Carol. *Daniel's Story*. Scholastic.
- Orgel, Doris. *The Devil in Vienna*. Penguin.
- \* Orlev, Uri. *The Island on Bird Street*. Houghton Mifflin.
- \* Spinelli, Jerry. *Milkweed*. Random House.
- Ten Boom, Corrie. *The Hiding Place*. Random House.
- Richter, Hans Peter. *Friedrich*. Penguin.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *I Was There*. Penguin.
- Ross, Stewart. *The Star Houses: A Story from the Holocaust*. Barron's Educational Series.
- Sender, Ruth Minsky. *The Cage*. Simon & Schuster.
- Volavkova, Hans. ed. *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*. Schocken.
- \* Yolen, Jane. *The Devil's Arithmetic*. Penguin.

### Some Other Books by John Boyne

- The Congress of Rough Riders*. Phoenix.
- Crippin, A Novel of Murder*. St. Martin's Press.
- Mutiny: A Novel of the Bounty*. St. Martin's Press.
- Next of Kin: A Novel*. St. Martin's Press.
- The Thief of Time*. St. Martin's Press.

[Note: These are all novels for adults.]

- \* NOVEL-TIES Study Guides are available for these titles.

## ANSWER KEY

### Chapters One, Two

Vocabulary: 1. f 2. d 3. a 4. h 5. g 6. b 7. c 8. e; 1. presumed 2. priorities 3. foreseeable 4. chaos 5. restrictions 6. frustration 7. dismissively 8. desolate

Questions: 1. Nobody ever explains his father's job to Bruno: they just say it is important and that the "Fury" has big things in mind for him. 2. Bruno's mother seems upset and sad about leaving the house in Berlin. 3. Bruno thinks Gretel is a "Hopeless Case" and would not care if she stayed behind in Berlin. 4. Bruno is reluctant to leave Berlin because he loves his large, comfortable house, which is close to his grandparents and accessible to his three good friends. 5. Bruno thinks the new house is desolate and small, set in a place where there are no other houses, and thus, no friends nearby. 6. Bruno takes an instant dislike to the young soldier, finding the man too serious. Maria seems awed by his presence, as she stands very straight and holds her hands in front of her without looking into his face.

### Chapters Three – Five

Vocabulary: Across—2. considerate 4. inscription 10. complementing 11. torture 12. distinctly 13. conviction; Down—1. decidedly 3. acknowledging 5. significance 6. customary 7. exasperation 8. insolent 9. insistent

Questions: 1. Gretel doesn't like the new house, but she defers to her father and plans to make the best of it. 2. Gretel hesitates because there is something in Bruno's manner as he looks out the window that upsets her. 3. Gretel is surprised because she cannot seem to make sense of the huge fence and what lay beyond it: a grassless area with low huts and large square buildings; smoke stacks in the distance; groups of boys and men. 4. The soldiers shout at the children, causing some of them to cry. 5. Gretel thinks the children on the other side of the fence are dirty and wants to avoid them. 6. Bruno's train was comfortable with few people, while the train on the other track was crowded and uncomfortable. 7. Bruno's father tells his son that "Out-With" is their new home now and insists that he becomes accustomed to the idea.

### Chapters Six, Seven

Vocabulary: 1. c 2. f 3. g 4. h 5. a 6. d 7. b 8. e; 1. diversion 2. incredulous 3. irritable 4. engaged 5. enforced 6. escapade 7. reverberated 8. distaste

Questions: 1. After Bruno calls his father stupid, Maria is horrified, insisting that his father is a good man. 2. Maria feels grateful because the Commandant gave her a job and paid for her mother's hospital care and funeral expenses. 3. Both Bruno and Gretel feel uncomfortable when Kotler treats Pavel in a disrespectful way. 4. Pavel carries Bruno back to the house and kindly and gently administers to his wounds. 5. Bruno is surprised that a doctor would be waiting on tables.

### Chapters Eight – Ten

Vocabulary: 1. dominated—controlled or ruled 2. coincide—happen at the same time 3. devise—think up or plan 4. tolerant—accepting of the beliefs and ways of others 5. retrieved—got back again 6. sinister—threatening 7. rummaged—searched thoroughly 8. confirmed—proved to be true 9. forlorn—miserable and hopeless 10. resolution—something decided upon

Questions: 1. After the play that turned out to be the last one, Grandmother had a fight with Bruno's father and stormed out of the house. 2. Grandmother thought that her son should care less about the uniform and more about what it represented. 3. Herr Liszt believes that the only books that are important are those about things that matter in his contemporary world and not about fiction. 4. Bruno decides to explore because he wonders what the difference is between the people in the striped pajamas and the people wearing the uniforms. 5. Bruno thinks that Shmuel's face is strange because it appears to be very thin and grey, and his eyes seem very sad. 6. While Bruno can only see how he and Shmuel are alike, Shmuel can see the big difference.

### Chapters Eleven – Thirteen

Vocabulary: 1. extravagant 2. enunciating 3. disdain 4. contradict 5. catastrophe 6. vital 7. deliberately 8. administered

Questions: 1. Bruno considered the Fury as being a rude guest after he expressed displeasure that Gretel was learning French, and abruptly left a conversation with the children to sit down in Father's seat at the head of the table. 2. The blonde woman continued to talk kindly to the children after the Fury walked out, praising Gretel for learning French and showing concern for Bruno's tight shoes. 3. It is clear that Bruno does not understand Shmuel's plight when he compares Shmuel's move to Out-With with his; does not believe that so many people could live in one room in the ghetto; or that there were no doors on Shmuel's train. Furthermore, he can't understand why the hundreds

of boys in the camp don't play. 4. Bruno does not tell his parents about Shmuel because he believes that they might not approve of him, and he doesn't want to give up his friendship with the boy. 5. Bruno believes that there are good soldiers like his father, while Shmuel has only experienced the cruelty of soldiers. 6. Bruno foresees that catastrophe is going to strike because Pavel looks smaller and paler than usual, and his service is impeded because he is unsteady on his feet and slow to respond. 7. Lieutenant Kotler is reluctant to talk about his father because the man left Germany for Switzerland. The Commandant suspects that Kotler's father left because he disagreed with Hitler's policies. 8. Bruno decides to be acquiescent at Out-With after he watches Lieutenant Kotler brutally punish Pavel for spilling wine, and nobody, not even Bruno's father, stops him.

**Chapters Fourteen, Fifteen**

Vocabulary: 1. dilemma 2. grimace 3. undeniable 4. sophistication 5. sarcasm 6. crucial 7. medicinal 8. seething; *Answer*—Bruno is ignorant of what is happening on the other side of the fence.

Questions: 1. After making a slip of the tongue, Bruno pretends that his friend is an imaginary one, fearing that Gretel will somehow ruin the friendship. 2. When Bruno repeats out loud the tragic disappearance of Shmuel's grandfather, he realizes how sad his friend must have been feeling: he regrets neglecting to offer his friend solace. 3. It is clear that Lieutenant Kotler is getting close to Bruno's mother because he is always in the living room making jokes with her; whenever the Commandant is away, he hangs around the house; he is at the house when Bruno goes to bed and before he wakes up in the morning; she calls him "Kurt" and "precious." 4. Shmuel is brought to Bruno's house by Lieutenant Kotler to polish the glasses. 5. Bruno gives Shmuel chicken to eat and then denies that he did so when Lieutenant Kotler questions him, leading Kotler to believe that the boy stole the food. 6. Bruno fears Kotler and does not have the courage to stand up for his friend by telling the truth.

**Chapters Sixteen – Eighteen**

Vocabulary: 1. e 2. d 3. c 4. a 5. g 6. b 7. f; 1. misshapen 2. commitment 3. rejection 4. departure 5. explicit 6. inconsolable 7. remotely

Questions: 1. Bruno is happier about his life at Out-With because his parents seem more cheerful, Lieutenant Kotler was transferred, and Shmuel is his friend. 2. Gretel's explanation about the fence makes little sense to someone like Bruno, who has no prejudice against Jews. 3. Bruno looks more like Shmuel after his father shaves his head because it is infested with lice. 4. When Bruno mentions the children on the other side of the fence, the Commandant realizes that the horrors of the camp are too close to his family. 5. Shmuel is particularly unhappy because his father disappeared after going on a work duty. 6. Bruno plans to get into the camp unnoticed because he has a shaven head and will wear a pair of the striped pajamas that Shmuel will bring for him. 7. Bruno sees his visit to the camp as an adventure and a way to see what is on the other side of the fence; Shmuel sees it as a chance to get help in locating his father.

**Chapters Nineteen, Twenty**

Vocabulary: 1. implanted 2. unaccustomed 3. random 4. appalled 5. mercilessly 6. logically

Questions: 1. Because it is raining hard on Friday, Bruno does not know if he can pursue his plan to get into the camp. 2. The boys would like to embrace. Bruno wants Shmuel to know how much he likes him, and Shmuel wants to thank Bruno for all his help. 3. Bruno imagined children playing and happy families sitting in rocking chairs and going to shops and cafes; however, he sees crowds of sad, skinny, hopeless people being bullied by soldiers. 4. Bruno doesn't leave because he wants to keep his promise to Shmuel to look for his father. 5. Bruno is prevented from going home because he and Shmuel get caught in a march. 6. Forgetting the names of his former friends, Bruno comes to realize that Shmuel is his best friend. To show affection for the boy, Bruno takes hold of his hand. 7. In denial, Bruno's mother expects to see him in Berlin; Gretel misses him very much and spends a lot of time alone in her room crying; his father spends all his time thinking about Bruno. 8. When the Commandant notices the gap at the base of the fence, he realizes that Bruno must have crawled under and been killed along with the inmates.